


**Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.**

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Officer:</b>	<b>LW</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14/01/26</b>	<b>Manager:</b>	<b>LH</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>16/1/26</b>
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<b>Application Ref:</b>	3/2025/0892			 <b>Ribble Valley Borough Council</b> <small>www.ribblevalley.gov.uk</small>
<b>Date Inspected:</b>	25/11/25	<b>Site Notice:</b>	25/11/25	
<b>Officer:</b>	LW			
<b>DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:</b>				<b>APPROVAL</b>

<b>Development Description:</b>	Proposed conversion from hairdressers with flat above to dwelling (Class C3) with annex accommodation and external alterations.
<b>Site Address/Location:</b>	5 Abbey View, Whalley Road, Billington, BB7 9NS.

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Parish/Town Council</b>
No comments received with respect to the proposed development.	

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies</b>
<b>LCC Highways:</b>	No objection subject to conditions.

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Additional Representations.</b>
<p>One letter of representation has been received. The concerns raised can be summarised as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of a long-established, successful local business;</li> <li>• The existing retail unit is not a conflicting use;</li> <li>• The plans appear to show two separate residential units with 2 kitchens on separate floors and 2 separate access points raising the possibility that the plans are for a flat plus Airbnb;</li> <li>• Potential loss of access to the rear of neighbouring properties and gardens due to parked vehicles;</li> <li>• Loss of privacy to neighbouring homes and gardens;</li> <li>• Loss of historic shop front;</li> <li>• Potential damage to neighbouring property as a result of building works;</li> <li>• Noise disturbance during construction.</li> </ul>	

<b>RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:</b>
<p><b>Ribble Valley Core Strategy:</b></p> <p>Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy          Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development          Key Statement EN5: Heritage Assets          Key Statement EC1: Business and Employment Development          Key Statement DMI2: Transport Considerations</p> <p>Policy DMG1: General Considerations          Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations          Policy DMG3: Transport &amp; Mobility          Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets          Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy</p>

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act  
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

**Relevant Planning History:**

3/2006/0089: Change of use from furnishings shop to Beauty Salon (Approved).

3/1996/0731: Internally illuminated fascia sign (advertisement consent) (Approved).

3/1993/0235: Change of use of shop to 2no. flats (Refused).

**ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:**

**Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The application relates to three-storey end terrace property at No.5 Abbey View, Whalley Road. The property comprises a hairdressers/ beauty salon at ground and lower ground floor level with living accommodation at first floor, accessed via an external staircase to the western side elevation. The application property occupies a corner plot location with its south and eastern elevations facing towards Longworth Road and Whalley Road respectively.

The site to which the proposal relates is located just outside the defined settlement area of Billington within a predominantly residential area and within the designated Whalley Conservation Area.

**Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**

The application property currently accommodates a mixed use, with the lower ground floor and ground floor comprising a hairdressers/ beauty salon (use class Sui Generis) and the first floor comprising domestic accommodation (use class C3). Consent is sought for the conversion of the application property's ground floor component from a hairdressers/ beauty salon to residential use to supplement the property's existing first floor level residential accommodation.

The resultant dwelling would comprise a living area, kitchen/ diner, study and WC/ utility at ground floor with two ensuite bedrooms and an additional study at first floor. The lower ground floor of the dwelling is to be utilised as ancillary annex accommodation, comprising an open plan living/ kitchen/ dining area, one ensuite bedroom and a study/ store.

External alterations are also proposed as part of the conversion works, including the replacement of the existing shop front with a domestic frontage comprising two windows and an access door. Fenestration alterations are also proposed to the northern, eastern, and western elevations, including the addition of new windows and incorporation of a balcony to the rear of the ground and first floor. New front boundary walls with gated access are also proposed, along with the removal of the existing external staircase.

**Principle of Development:**

The proposed conversion would result in the loss of existing employment generating floorspace and as such, Policy DMB1 is primarily, but not solely engaged, for the purposes of assessing the acceptability of the proposed development, with the Policy reading as follows:

*Proposals for the development, redevelopment or conversion of sites with employment generating potential in the plan area for alternative uses will be assessed with regard to the following criteria:*

- 1. The provision of Policy DMG1, and*
- 2. The compatibility of the proposal with other plan policies of the LDF, and*
- 3. The environmental benefits to be gained by the community, and*
- 4. The economic and social impact caused by loss of employment opportunities to the borough, and*
- 5. Any attempts that have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the site (must be supported by evidence (such as property agents details including periods of marketing and response) that the property/ business has been marketed for business use for a minimum period of six months or information that demonstrates to the Council's satisfaction that the current use is not viable for employment purposes).*

Having regard to criteria points 1 and 2, it is not considered that the conversion works would result in any measurable conflict with the provisions of Policy DMG1 or any other plan policies. With respect to criteria point 3, a sole residential use of the application property would likely give rise to less noise and comings and goings in comparison to the existing hairdressers/ beauty salon use which in turn would be of benefit to the amenity of neighbouring receptors.

Turning to criteria point 4, the application property is located outside of a Main Centre Boundary and does not form part of a primary shopping frontage. In addition, the existing business does not utilise all of the property's floorspace for employment opportunities in light of the first-floor component of the property already being in residential use. Accordingly, the loss of potential employment opportunities arising from a sole residential use of the application property and the subsequent impacts on the economy would be negligible, particularly taking account of the small-scale nature of the business operation that the property currently accommodates or could accommodate. In this respect, the loss of an employment generating use of this size is unlikely to yield an impact to the local economy to the extent that this alone would warrant the refusal to support the sole residential use of the application property.

Furthermore, Policy DMB1 requires that the proposed development should also be assessed with regards to any attempts that have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the site. In cases/ locations where the retention of an employment generating use within a site is preferable, the policy requires the marketing of the site for business use for a minimum of 6 months in order to support/ justify the potential loss of the employment generating use. In this instance, no attempts have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the ground floor component of the application property; however, as conveyed above, the loss of potential employment opportunities arising from a sole residential use of the application property is not considered to be of such a scale and quantum to warrant significant concerns in respect of loss. This lack of marketing would not justify a refusal of the application.

As such, taking account of the above matters, the principle of converting the application property to sole residential use raises no significant direct conflicts with Policy DMB1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy that would warrant the refusal to grant planning permission in relation to matters regarding the loss of employment generating floorspace.

The proposal would also incorporate annex accommodation at lower ground floor level. As such, Policy DMH5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy is also engaged.

In respect to the proposed annex, Policy DMH5 reads as follows:

*Proposals to extend or alter existing residential properties must accord with Policy DMG1 and any relevant designations within which the site is located. Proposals that are for the extension of properties to provide accommodation for elderly or dependent relatives will also be subject to the following criteria:*

- 1. The development must be capable of integration into the main dwelling or a use that is ancillary to the use of the main dwellinghouse when circumstances change.*
- 2. The extension should generally speaking provide only a modest level of accommodation.*

The annex would utilise the lower ground floor of the property and would therefore be capable of integration to the main dwellinghouse should circumstances change. In addition to this, the annex accommodation would provide a relatively modest level of accommodation, comprising an open-plan lounge/ kitchen/ diner, one ensuite bedroom and a study/store. As such, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of the material planning considerations.

**Impact upon Character/appearance of Conservations Area:**

The application building is located within the designated Whalley Conservation Area, as such, in assessing the proposal, regard must be given to the statutory duties imposed on the authority in respect of the preservation and enhancement of such asset's resultant from the proposed development, namely s72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act.

Additionally Key Statement EN5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that:

*There will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significant of heritage assets and their settings.*

Policy DME4 also states, in respect of development within conservation areas, that development will be assessed on the following basis:

*Proposals within, or affecting views into and out of, or affecting the setting of a conservation area will be required to conserve and where appropriate enhance its character and appearance and those elements which contribute towards its significance.*

Policy DMG1 is also engaged in concert with Key Statement EN5 and Policy DME4 insofar that the Policy sets out general Development Management considerations which state:

*In determining planning applications, all development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials [and] consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. Particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out further duties in respect to determining proposals that affect designated heritage assets. Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that "*when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).*"

The submitted details propose that the building will be converted from that of a ground floor hairdressers with living accommodation above, to that of a single dwellinghouse with annex accommodation, alongside alterations including the insertion of new fenestration, balconies to the rear and the erection of front boundary walls.

It is noted that concerns have been raised with respect to the loss of the historic shop front. Whilst the loss of the shop front is acknowledged, the surrounding area is predominantly residential in character with the application property forming the end of a row of terraced residential properties. Taking this into account, it is not anticipated that the removal of the existing shop front and replacement with a traditional stone-built domestic frontage, comprising a central access door and two windows, would result in any detrimental harm upon the character or significance of the surrounding area. As such, this in itself would not warrant the refusal to grant planning permission in this particular instance.

In addition to this, the removal of the existing external staircase and insertion of new window openings to the side and rear of the property is not anticipated to result to any detrimental impact upon the character of the existing building and therefore no concerns are raised in this regard. The proposed balconies to the rear of the property would be visible from Longworth Road and Whalley Road; however, these elements would not appear so incongruous to warrant the refusal to grant planning permission, insofar that they would be recessed from the western side elevation of the building and would not project beyond the properties existing rear outrigger. As such, the proposed additions would not appear overtly prominent when read in context with the existing built form of the property and are therefore considered acceptable in this particular instance. Moreover, the proposed new front stone boundary walls and black railings/ gate would continue the existing boundary treatment featured to the front of the adjoined residential dwellings and would therefore appear wholly in keeping with the character of the street scene.

With the above in mind, it is not considered that the proposed works raise any conflict with Key Statement EN5 or Policy DMG1 or DME4 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, nor any measurable conflicts with the aims, objectives and requirements of Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Impact Upon Residential Amenity:**

The application property is located within a predominantly residential area with the first-floor component of the property itself already being in residential use. With this in mind, it is not anticipated that the residential use of the property's ground floor component would give rise to noise, disturbances and activity levels that would exceed those resulting from neighbouring properties within the immediate vicinity of the site, nor would it exceed those associated with the existing commercial use.

Some external alterations are also proposed as part of the conversion works, including the removal of the existing shop front and insertion of a domestic frontage comprising 2no. windows and an access door, fenestration alterations to the northern, eastern, and western elevations, balconies to the rear and new front boundary wall with gated access.

The openings proposed to the northern rear elevation would not have a direct interface with any nearby residential receptors, whilst the openings to the front (south elevation) and western side elevation would be sufficiently distanced from nearby residential receptors so as to mitigate the risk of any direct overlooking or loss of privacy. As such, no concerns are raised in this respect. The proposed balconies would also not result in any significant loss of privacy to neighbouring dwellings, being screened from the adjoined terraced properties along Abbey View by the existing built form of the application property and sufficiently distanced from the residential properties along Longworth Road.

The openings to the eastern elevation of the application property face directly towards the private amenity space to the rear of the adjoined residential properties within the terraced row. The 2no. existing openings featured to the eastern elevation of the application property currently serve a lobby and WC which are non-habitable spaces; however, as part of the conversion works, the existing lobby window would be relocated with both windows shown to serve the kitchen/dining area. Given this would likely increase the perceived sense of overlooking experienced by the neighbouring residents and the fact that the proposed kitchen/ dining area would be served by multiple other window openings, it is considered that the 2no. windows to the eastern side elevation could be obscurely glazed in order to protect the amenity of the neighbouring dwellings without significantly impacting the amenity of the proposed dwellinghouse. This can be secured by an appropriately worded condition.

In addition to the above, it is not anticipated that the proposed retaining walls to the front of the property would result in any measurable undue impact upon the existing amenities of nearby residential properties, taking into account their relatively modest height.

It is noted that concerns have been raised with respect to potential damage to neighbouring properties as a result of building works. However, this is a private civil matter and does not form a material planning

consideration in the determination of this application. Concerns have also been raised in regard to construction noise; however, the scale of the works proposed is relatively minor and any noise disturbance would be a short-term temporary impact. A planning condition requiring the submission of mitigation details is therefore not justified in this case.

With the above in mind, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in any significant detrimental harm upon the existing amenities of any nearby residential receptors that would warrant the refusal to grant planning permission, subject to a condition requiring the openings to the eastern elevation to be obscure glazed.

#### **Highways and Parking:**

The application has been subject to review by Lancashire County Council Highways who raise no objection to the proposal.

The development seeks to make an amendment to the front of the property adjacent to Whalley Road by creating a front boundary wall with a gated access. The Local Highway Authority (LHA) have requested that the boundary wall and any planted vegetation be kept no higher than 0.9m above the carriageway level to ensure the development does not have an adverse effect on the visibility of the junction of Longworth Road and Whalley Road. This can be secured by a condition.

The submitted Proposed Site Plan shows that the development can provide two off-street parking spaces to the western elevation of the property which is considered acceptable for a three-bedroom dwelling. However, the LHA note that the internal dimensions of the first-floor study comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards for a bedroom and therefore they are of the view that the dwelling could increase the number of bedrooms within the property in the future which would require a third parking space to be in line with parking standards. Despite this, it is acknowledged that the site is in close proximity of bus stops situated on Whalley Road and local amenities are a short walk from the site. There are also parking restrictions on the surrounding roads to control on street parking and the development is likely to have a lower parking demand than the current commercial use. As such, the LHA will accept a shortfall in off-street parking provisions in this particular instance.

Taking account of the above, the LHA are of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site subject to the imposition of conditions.

It is noted that the Local Highway Authority have requested a condition requiring the submission of a Construction Management Plan or Construction Method Statement prior to works commencing. However, given the relatively small scale of the development, the Local Planning Authority do not consider this to be necessary in this particular instance.

It is also recognised that concerns have been raised with respect to the loss of access to the rear of the neighbouring properties and gardens as a result of the parking of vehicles at the proposal site. However, the proposal would still allow for a pedestrian / bin access for neighbouring residents. Whether that access aligns with any covenants that might exist is a private civil matter and not a material planning consideration.

#### **Landscape/Ecology:**

The development is exempt from having to achieve the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements as it is subject to the de minimis exemption.

#### **Other Matters:**

Concerns have also been raised with respect to the proposed floor plans showing two residential units (including two kitchens on separate floors). Following discussions with the agent, it has been confirmed that the lower ground floor of the property is to be utilised as ancillary annex accommodation and not a separate residential unit/ holiday let. The description of development has thus been updated to reflect this, and a condition can be attached to secure the lower ground floor as annex accommodation, ancillary to the main residential use of No.5 Abbey View.

**Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**

As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised, the application is recommended for approval.

<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	That planning consent be granted subject to the imposition of conditions.
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